

Public Outreach Plan

Groundwater Management Plan for Sonoma Valley

Draft: November 14, 2006

I. Introduction

The Sonoma County Water Agency and its cooperating partners are working with the Basin Advisory Panel (BAP) to develop a groundwater management plan for the Sonoma Valley using a collaborative structure that includes representatives of local agencies, community organizations, businesses and groundwater users. After approval the BAP will recommend the plan to responsible agencies for adoption. Educating the community at large, elected officials and decision-makers as well as general public outreach are key to successful development and implementation of the groundwater management plan for Sonoma Valley. The goal of this public outreach plan is to inform the wider audience in the region about groundwater management planning in the Sonoma Valley and to outline when and how to conduct public outreach.

II. Outreach Timeline

	Fall 06	Feb 07	Jul	Sept	Dec	Plan Approval
Develop Outreach Plan						
Expand Mailing List						
Hold Public Meeting	X					X
Staff Conduct Organizational Briefings						
Members Conduct Constituent Briefings						
General Brochure						
Newsletter/Articles						
Create Links on Panel Member Web Sites						
FAQ						
Prepare Guide to Sonoma Valley Water Resources						
Set up SV Groundwater Website						
Monthly Website Updates						
Media: Press Releases						
Media Packet						

III. Expand Interested Parties List

Panel members and staff will contribute names of organizations, agencies, and individuals to help the outreach effort. The interested parties list will be broad and include anyone who would like to stay informed about groundwater management planning throughout plan development and anyone who the Panel thinks should be informed about the outcome of the planning effort.

SCWA staff will keep the mailing list that can be used for email distribution and regular post as needed.

IV. Public Meetings

The Board of Directors of the Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA), as the lead agency, must adopt a formal resolution to move forward with the groundwater management plan. The Board will hold a public hearing with a comment period before adopting the resolution to proceed with developing the groundwater management plan.

Once the plan has been developed, SCWA will once again hold a formal public meeting to solicit input on the plan. However, the Basin Advisory Panel will use briefings and other forms of outreach as its primary tools to keep the public informed and to seek public input on its work.

V. Organizational Outreach and Briefings

Educational briefings will help broadcast the groundwater planning effort providing information related to the technical aspects of the project, the planning process, and plan implementation. Staff (and Panel members) will conduct briefings with a wide audience, not closely affiliated with the planning effort. Outreach to groups such as Kiwanis, Rotary, homeowners' associations, and agricultural groups will be necessary at key milestones. Staff anticipate conducting briefings and outreach to these groups through their formal meetings and/or internal newsletters. The purpose of these briefings will be to share information about the Panel's work and to solicit input and identify concerns for consideration during plan development.

VI. Constituent Briefings

Educating constituents is critical to ensure that constituent interests are represented in the planning process and that constituents will support the groundwater management plan when presented for their approval once the plan is developed. Panel members aim to represent the interests of their constituents and will be responsible for briefing their constituents at project milestones. Staff will provide talking points, handouts and informational materials to facilitate reporting at constituent meetings.

VII. Informational Materials

Developing a variety of informational materials is critical to the successful education of the public and constituents and necessary to circulate consistent, accurate information. Staff will develop a range of stand-alone and inserts for existing publications. The materials include the following:

- **General Brochure:** A general brochure describing the development of the Sonoma Valley Groundwater Management Plan and its timeline.
- **Power Point Slides:** 3-5 slides outlining the project and timeline.
- **Newsletter/Articles:** A short summary paragraph and a 300-word article for organizational newsletters. In addition, articles should be written to distribute to the media and partners at project milestones.
- **Web Link and Project Summary on Panel Member Web Sites:** Panel member web sites could also post a link and brief project description to the main Sonoma Valley Groundwater Management Planning website ([list http: address here](http://address here)).
- **Frequently asked Question (FAQ) List:** Staff would develop this list as a stand-alone webpage on the main website and as an essential document for a press kit, handed out at public meetings and used by Panel organizations.

- **Guide to Sonoma Valley Water Resources:** A guide to water resources in Sonoma Valley for distribution to the BAP and general public. The purpose of the guide is to provide technical information, legal and water rights overview, governance options, as well as basic facts, figures, and frequently asked questions on water and groundwater issues in the Sonoma Valley.

VIII. Website (list [http: address here](#))

SCWA will set up a website for the Sonoma Valley Groundwater Management Plan as an information portal for the project. Linking partner agencies and organizations' websites to the web site is also important. The website should be completed by December 2006 and will have the following pages:

- Home page – summary and “what’s new” information.
- Project page – detailed project information.
- Outreach page – briefings, community meetings schedule and meeting summaries.
- Calendar – updated list of meetings and milestones as well as project timeline.
- Document page – electronic listing of all pertinent documents related to the project.
- Contact page – Team contact information.
- FAQ’s (frequently asked questions) page.
- Links page – links to local groups, agencies, and others involved in the project.

Staff anticipates updating the website monthly, and more often if needed.

IX. Media Plan

Working with local and regional media will be important. Press releases should be distributed at each major milestone of the project. The facilitator will review press releases to ensure that they accurately reflect the agreements reached and support the overall goal of consensus of the BAP. The local and regional media to include on the press release distribution list include:

- Santa Rosa Press Democrat (www.pressdemo.com)
- Sonoma Index-Tribune (www.sonomanews.com)
- Sonoma West Times and News (www.sonomawest.com)
- Petaluma Argus-Courier (www.arguscourier.com)
- San Francisco Chronicle (www.sfgate.com)
- Kenwood Press (George McCleod)
- Others?